

I do not think in any way, shape or form the failure of the Sieck amendment is to be regarded as criticism of those entities. I would just like to speak briefly to the bill, then I am sure others will speak, and then I will come back later on. But basically the bill does these four or five major changes. It provides for the appointment of the Director of the Natural Resource Commission by the Governor after being nominated by the Natural Resources Commission. It provides that we create a Water Management Board. The Water Management Board has substantial responsibilities and I am sure that we recognize...I will just outline who serves on that Board. The Director of Conservation and Survey, Director of Game and Parks, Director of Natural Resources and two members appointed by the Governor who have experience in natural resources, one of whom shall have expertise in water project development and management. This Water Management Board will then have a jurisdiction over the water management fund which will handle projects in excess of \$10 million. The Water Development Fund will handle projects of less than \$10 million. The bill also provides, as has been indicated this morning, the recognition of instream flow benefits, the first I think in the history of Nebraska and I think it is justified and I think it can work to the benefit of both the individuals, the conservationists, environmentalists and to the benefit of agriculture. I would not have put it in there if I did not think it was beneficial to all aspects of the State of Nebraska and all elements of society. It provides also for a mandatory groundwater management plan. There was some criticism about whether or not we should require the districts to expend the funds for that effort. But I think it is time now after ten or twelve years of existence of the Natural Resource Districts that they have some kind of a groundwater management plan. It has been raised many times as we travel across the state and I think it is a legitimate question. We tried to answer it by providing this and this is in the bill. I would hope that the bill will be adopted. I know we are running short of time this morning. I would like to answer any questions you might have. I know others want to speak on the bill, but that is all I will have to say on the bill at this time. I think it is a good bill. I think the bill deserves your support. I believe the bill